

2009 Report on Service, Savings, and Sustainability:
How the City of Saskatoon is Improving its Productivity

Presented to City Council June 28, 2010



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Introduction

Modern cities need to be increasingly creative, innovative and proactive in planning, problem solving and decision-making if they are to be successful in the new world economy. This is a competitive environment where the only constant seems to be change. The pace of this change is accelerating and the diversity of issues that our country, our provinces, and our cities face are becoming more complex.

The significance of this change and the staggering speed at which it is occurring is best demonstrated when put into the context of the amount of new knowledge being created. Estimates are that seven out of every ten children currently in the primary grades will work in a job that does not exist today. Any science related degree or technical trade related certification is out of date by the time they graduate. The pace of technological change and advancement is so rapid that any new technology device is deemed obsolete in three to six months after it is released. The way society solved problems and applied its knowledge in the past will not be sufficient to be successful in this new environment. An attendee at a recent City-hosted workshop aptly summed up the situation before us with a quote by W. Edward Demming, "Change is mandatory, survival is optional, choose wisely."

Many look at the City's and the community's past successes and wonder why the existing model cannot serve us well going forward. Why is it that the City of Saskatoon must change in order to be successful? The answer appears not from the accelerated change environment described above, but also from considering the array only of complex issues cities are facing.

From an environmental perspective, many experts consider that alternative transportation modes, water, and urban sprawl are the most important issues facing us today. On the social front, affordable housing, homelessness, and poverty have become priorities for all orders of government. Economically, the lack of sustainable and predictable urban funding sources is considered paramount. In addition, and as noted by such organizations as the Conference Board of Canada, Canadian cities are facing serious infrastructure challenges. They suggest that new and innovative funding models are needed for the renewal and upgrade of our infrastructure so that we can increase our competitiveness in the new economy. Simply put, consensus thinking is clear in that cities must change to remain competitive and ultimately successful in addressing this list of existing and emerging issues.

This environment of accelerated and complex change is creating an "expectation gap". A gap is emerging because the expectations of the public are changing in such a way that the skills and abilities of governments and their employees are insufficient to meet the new demands. As the order of government that is closest to the people it serves, municipal governments must reorganize and retrain themselves to fill this gap and meet the public's future expectations.

For the City of Saskatoon, this means that we need to become more goal-oriented, responsive and adaptive in our approach to municipal governance. Thus, the City of Saskatoon is seeking new and innovative ways to provide the existing and emerging programs and services to its citizens. If we expect to get to a different result by applying the same old method and process, then we are likely going to be very disappointed in the outcomes.

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Given the above, the Administration is taking a fresh look at how it operates and how the corporation can become more adaptive and responsive in this new economic order. As such, the City of Saskatoon is exploring and implementing new ways of:

- improving our service;
- increasing our savings; and;
- growing our city in a sustainable way.

One of the key deliverables from this initiative is to create a culture of innovation and creativity within the corporation. This is an environment where staff are well prepared and willing to take on new challenges with new approaches, and new strategies with enthusiastic energy and drive. In essence, the City of Saskatoon needs to prepare as an organization to “act faster” and become a world class innovator.

What does a city that is a world class innovator look like? The Administration recently attended a presentation by renowned futurist Jim Carroll, who describes innovative organizations as ones that display a tremendous amount of optimism and are able to reframe the concept of innovation. That is, they are able to think, act and do differently in order to solve the big challenges they are facing. Everybody in the organization is constantly asking these important questions:

1. What can I do to run the business better? How can we become more efficient, more effective, and more productive to better serve our citizens?
2. How do we “grow” the business? For example, how do we respond to new challenges such as a future with a senior majority? How do we transform the organization and reconcile or determine the types of business or service lines that a municipal government should be providing?
3. How fast do we ingest new ideas into the organization so we can provide better service? Are we integrating these new ideas and new approaches into our operations?
4. How do we create a more flexible organization to attract and retain an engaged and productive workforce? In an environment where 50% of today's graduates believe that self-employment offers more security and satisfaction than a full-time job, and their idea of a long-term career commitment is two-to-five years, what policies and strategies and opportunities do we need to implement to manage this challenge?

The Administration believes that by focusing on two key areas of employee development, the City can create the type of organization that can meet the challenges identified above, by becoming a world class innovator that strives for superior performance. Hence, the City of Saskatoon is concentrating on changing attitudes and behaviours within the leadership team and staff within the corporation in order to raise our organization's performance and become more responsive and creative in delivering better service, lowering costs, and increasing sustainability. The following section outlines the focus of this initiative.

Training and Education for Employees

A key driver of strengthening any organization, including the City of Saskatoon, is training. In order for the City to achieve its goals and objectives, all of its employees must be an integral part of the solution. As a result, the City is providing training to permanent employees, at every level, to help them think differently about their work, solve

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problems for citizens, and take ownership for results. Studies show that organizational change initiatives typically fail because employees are not engaged or do not understand what needs to change. The City has invested in this training, from top to bottom, so positive change will take root throughout our organization.

The City of Saskatoon has implemented an intensive training program with a 30-year track record in various private sector companies and public sector organizations around the world. This program is designed to encourage employees to perform their work in new and innovative ways.

As noted earlier, the training is focused on service, savings, and sustainability for Saskatoon. City employees, in their everyday work, need to think about ways to improve service, find savings, and grow our city in a sustainable way.

The training concentrates on changing attitudes rather than modifying specific job skills. It is designed to ensure we are aligning every employee's daily activities with the City of Saskatoon's broader goals and overall strategic plan. This means all employees are working in the same direction, doing the best job for the citizens they serve.

When it comes to employee training and development, the goal is to be both cost-conscious and competitive. The City wants to ensure that the citizens of Saskatoon receive good value for their tax dollars. The City also wants to make sure that it is an employer of choice, competitive in the market in terms of training opportunities and able to recruit and retain talented employees.

Leadership Style

The leadership style within the City of Saskatoon is changing to become one that is more open and transparent, more accountable and responsive. This includes developing and implementing ways in which the City can be more creative and innovative in providing quality service to the citizens of Saskatoon. This is accomplished by focusing on people and working to create an environment that enables people to be productive, effective and safe, and to utilize good management skills and practices in our day-to-day activities.

To accomplish this, the Administration has adopted five guiding principles that are intended to guide the behaviours and decisions for every employee. These guiding principles are: trust, honesty, integrity, respect, and courage. Through these principles, the City is establishing an atmosphere of principle-based leadership within the corporation.

Efforts are currently underway for each department to discuss what these guiding principles mean to their employees and how they can be applied on a daily basis.

The Human Resources Department is developing a list of leadership competencies that will be applied corporately. These competencies will include the ability to:

- adapt and respond to changing needs of the community;
- lead and empower others; and,
- demonstrate commitment to public service.

These competencies will guide the recruitment for new staff, and will be applied during the training and performance management of all employees.

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What Has Happened to Date

This has been a very incremental and measured process for the Administration. In 2005 and 2006, the Utility Services Department, followed by the Infrastructure Services Department, identified several issues that were contributing to the need for a change within the organization. These issues were summarized as:

- the rapid growth of Saskatoon and the increasing demand for services
- the high staff turnover due to retirements; and,
- a challenging workplace environment within some operational units.

Following a review of the key elements within each department the General Managers elected to focus their change strategy on people and leadership, so that change could occur from the inside out.

The objective of each department's review was to change the attitudes and behaviours of the employees, and to create a new approach and way of doing business. The intent of this approach was to set a clear direction and develop a set of priorities that enabled employees to enjoy their work and in the process, allowed them to become more innovative and productive.

When the two General Managers reviewed the activities within their departments, they realized that there were no guiding documents such as departmental goals and principles to guide their activities. Consequently, they determined that a framework was needed to provide employees with focus, clarity and consensus, in order to help them in performing their day-to-day work.

Given these scenarios, both Departments undertook initiatives that would serve as the foundation for the organizational change process. The first step was to conduct surveys to assess the current culture, and to determine what employees viewed as the ideal culture. The survey instrument utilized was provided by Human Synergistics Inc. One survey would serve as the benchmark, while the other survey regarding the ideal culture would establish a shared understanding of what the department wanted to achieve.

The survey showed both departments were experiencing high levels of conflict, confrontation, and negativity. The culture was one that led to poor group problem-solving and "watered down" solutions to problems. There was also a tendency for employees to shift responsibilities to others to avoid being blamed for problems or errors. Some employees were unwilling to make decisions, take action, or accept risks.

The second step was to invite all the employees to participate in a four-day, educational workshop developed by The Pacific Institute to provide them with an understanding of how people develop and change attitudes and behaviours.

Changes in Attitudes and Behaviours Since 2005

A second assessment survey was conducted in 2009 and showed a remarkable change in both the Infrastructure Services and Utility Services Departments. The survey indicated that, in comparison to three or four years ago, employees in both departments were:

- performing more as a team;
- more innovative, offering higher quality products and services; and,
- more satisfied and committed to the organization.

According to Human Synergistics Inc., the positive change in results occurred at a much higher rate than is typically experienced by most organizations.

In 2009, all departments were surveyed to assess the current culture, and to determine what employees viewed as the ideal culture. Departments will be surveyed again in 2011 to compare to the 2009 benchmark data.

As stated above, permanent employees in all departments are taking part in the four-day educational workshops, and there has been a very positive reaction by almost all employees who have taken the course as they are anxious to apply the tools and information to both personal and work situations.

A Return on Investment

As a result of this intensive training and leadership program, the City of Saskatoon is experiencing changes in the level of creativity and innovation being undertaken by its employees. There has been a shift in the mindset of the leadership team and staff at all levels within the organization to focus on "what" needs to be done, without addressing "how" it will be achieved at the outset. This has allowed employees to solve what were previously insurmountable problems, and to think about new and creative ways of problem-solving.

This report replaces the "Productivity Improvement Report" that was tabled annually by the Administration. It highlights the successes and innovative solutions that were implemented in 2009, beginning with a section listing awards presented to the City of Saskatoon. It demonstrates how the investment in employee training and leadership is contributing to:

- improving our service;
- increasing our savings; and,
- growing our city in a sustainable way.

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What Others Are Saying About Us

The following is a quote from the owner of a construction company in Saskatoon:

"I just wanted to pass along a quick email to tell you how service oriented and helpful I find your Building Standards Branch to be. Everyone I deal with there is very quick to get back to our company and their assistance is always forwarded with a view to helping out although not compromising the Code they must enforce. People are quick to complain in this world but we feel that when people perform at a high level that they should be commended. Pass along my thoughts to Bob and his group."

Awards

Canadian Award for Financial Reporting

The Government Finance Officers' Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the *Canadian Award for Financial Reporting* to the City of Saskatoon for its annual financial report. The award was based on the City's submission of its 2008 financial statements and received in 2010. The *Canadian Award for Financial Reporting* program was established to encourage municipal governments throughout Canada to publish high quality financial reports and to provide peer recognition and technical guidance for officials preparing these reports. Its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.

The annual report was judged by an impartial Canadian Review Committee to meet the high standards of the program, including demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" designed to clearly communicate the municipality's financial story and to motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

Canada's Second Best Run City

Saskatoon was named Canada's second best run city in Canada by Maclean's Magazine in July 2009. Maclean's compared 31 of Canada's biggest cities, and Saskatoon was second to Burnaby, B.C. as the best run city in the country. The survey company for Maclean's gathered and compared information into seven broad categories: government and finance; taxation; safety and protection; transportation; environmental health; economic development; and recreation and culture. They measured efficiency and effectiveness. Saskatoon was listed with others as providing "great service at a good price".

Canada's Most Business Friendly City

Saskatoon was named as Canada's most business friendly city by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) in October 2009. The CFIB notes that the "surest signs of an entrepreneurial hot spot are the presence of a high concentration of entrepreneurs and a high business start-up rate (presence). It is also

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important that business owners have high levels of optimism and success in their operations (perspective). Good public policy is also critical, so we look at the presence of supportive local government tax and regulatory policies (policy).” The research involved “twelve index components placed into three major group categories: presence..., perspective..., and policy...”

Municipal Service Excellence - Affordable Housing Business Plan

The Saskatchewan Municipal Awards are designed to recognize and celebrate excellence and innovation on the part of Saskatchewan’s municipalities, and promote the successes of Saskatchewan’s municipal sector beyond its traditional audience and to all of Saskatchewan.

The City of Saskatoon received the top award in the Municipal Service Excellence Category for our Affordable Housing Business Plan.

Premier’s Award of Excellence in Design - Pleasant Hill Concept Plan and River Landing Streetscape

Held in conjunction with Design Week, the Premier’s Awards of Excellence in Design recognized the great applied design work being done in Saskatchewan. The award categories are as follows: architecture, community planning, engineering, graphic design, interior design, landscape architecture, and collaborative. The City of Saskatoon received the Premier’s Award of Excellence in Design for two projects:

- a) Pleasant Hill Village Concept Plan - The City of Saskatoon won in the community planning category for the Pleasant Hill Village Concept Plan. The Pleasant Hill Village Concept Plan is a comprehensive redevelopment scheme for 13 acres of land in the heart of the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood. The plan is the result of extensive community involvement and includes a mix of uses including a new school, new park space, family and seniors’ housing. Several sites have been remediated and provided to developers to rejuvenate the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood.
- b) River Landing Streetscape - The City of Saskatoon received the Award of Merit in the Collaborative Category for the River Landing Streetscape. This marks our fourth award at the last three award ceremonies. The project for the River Landing Streetscape is located between Spadina Crescent and the riverbank from the Traffic Bridge to Avenue C. The project celebrates Saskatoon’s distinct culture through public art, interpretation of heritage events, and the installation of heritage artifacts on the site.

2009 Major Projects

There were four major projects in 2009 that demonstrated creativity and innovation by the employees of the City of Saskatoon. These projects will improve service to the citizens of Saskatoon, produce savings or add new revenues, and support growing our city in a sustainable manner. These four projects alone have had a positive return on investment to the staff training and leadership program, and reflect the type of ingenuity that is needed for the City of Saskatoon to continue to be a world class innovator.

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Circle Drive South River Crossing - Estimated Savings: \$50 million

A new and innovative approach was used for the building of the Circle Drive South River Crossing. Just over two years ago, staff committed to finding a creative and innovative approach that would successfully launch this project. The City established the technical requirements for the construction of the Circle Drive South River Crossing, and awarded the contract based on the ability to meet these requirements, price, and schedule. The tender process was designed to ensure the cost of the project is guaranteed (approximately \$50 million lower than estimated), and the schedule is guaranteed. In effect, the Circle Drive South River Crossing will be completed on budget and on time.

Hydropower Project at the Weir - Potential New Revenue Stream: \$3.6 million annually (starting in 2016), increasing to \$10 million (by 2036)

A recent study has concluded that a hydropower station can be incorporated into the existing weir, and is both technically feasible and economically viable. The most viable station option could supply power to 3,120 homes. The proposed development would provide green power and protect the weir infrastructure while maintaining or improving the public safety at the weir; and would provide opportunities for leisure activities such as the proposed whitewater park, pelican viewing, and a pedestrian river crossing over the weir.

Rain Fall Flooding - Millions of dollars in savings to property owners for each rain event

The City developed an innovative solution to respond to the longstanding problem of basement flooding in homes after large rain falls. Rather than divert rain volumes to treatment and pumping stations in the north end (at a cost of \$70 million) collector tanks were installed below the surface and the excess water from the storm sewer fills the tanks rather than spilling into the basements of homes. In the past, our citizens experienced multi-million dollars in damages to their homes, resulting in many claims against the City.

Deconstruction of Mitchell's Plant Estimated savings: \$3,000,000 (landfill space savings) and \$4.5 - \$6.5 million (savings in award of contract)

To make way for the completion of the Circle Drive South River Crossing, employees found creative ways to salvage and recycle 98% of the building, redirecting more than 70,000 metric tonnes of building and site material to be reused and recycled. Also, the price for the demolition project was estimated at \$6 million to \$8 million. Due to the innovative option of deconstruction and reuse of materials, the project attracted 15 companies to bid on the project, making it a very competitive bid process. The contract was awarded for \$1.5 million.

The following section lists examples of creative and innovative projects and initiatives that occurred in 2009 and are categorized under:

- improving our service;
- increasing our savings; and,
- growing our city in a sustainable way.

Improving Our Service

Building Permits

The Administration committed to the building industry to provide a five-day turnaround on residential permits. This appeared to be a reasonable target when there were approximately 500 building permits processed per year. However, the number of requests to process residential building permits is increasing, and in 2010, it is estimated that over 1,000 building permits will be processed, while for the most part, maintaining the goal of a five-day turnaround.

Allocations from Land Development Fund to Civic Projects and Programs

The Land Development Fund contains the funds derived from the operation of the City's Land Bank Program. The purpose of these funds is to use the profits that the City makes from land sales and re-invest them in our community. For example, \$1 million was allocated to the re-development that is occurring in the Pleasant Hill neighbourhood, and \$5 million has been allocated to affordable housing initiatives throughout the city.

My Utility Account

With the launch of "My Utility Account" in September 2009, customers have online access to their utility account information. Customers can now access utility information for the previous two years, including consumption data to assist with their conservation efforts. Sufficient data is not yet available to quantify savings, but it is anticipated that the number of calls to the customer service centre will be reduced, as well as staff time spent in preparing consumption data.

Coordination of Road Closures with Hard Surface Weed Control

Employees with the hard surface and weed control programs spend considerable time working on high traffic/high speed arterials throughout the city. Employees working in parks and on roadways have coordinated the timing of work needed for weed control with other planned lane closures. This coordination of activities reduced the number of roadway closures, saving time and money, as well as increasing safety for motorists and work crews.

Implementation of New Software for Public Works Dispatch

Public Works Dispatch implemented new software which allows the public to access information through an automated "pick" list of pertinent operational information such as water interruptions, electrical outages, snow clearing, etc. The software can be updated/changed as often as required. Providing this pre-recorded information increases our customer service to people who are only looking for routine information, while allowing customer service representatives to deal with emergency or more complicated issues.

Transit Ambassador Training

The responsibilities incumbent of an Operator with Saskatoon Transit involves professional driving along with strict attention to safety and customer service. Our Operators interact with people from all walks of life. Transit Ambassador training focuses on four core modules: (1) essentials of customer service, (2) managing customer feedback, (3) effective communications, and (4) managing stress. This ongoing training module has improved the quality of service delivery and has reduced the number of customer complaints.

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Transit School Liaison

A Saskatoon Transit Service Supervisor was assigned to liaise with all schools falling under the jurisdiction of the public and separate school boards. Youth receive education on proper ridership, and there has been improved communication and response times to issues and events related to school excursions and general use of Saskatoon's Transit service by high school students.

Bus Assessment Initiative

For years, Saskatoon Transit had a growing number of Operator complaints and Workers Compensation claims regarding its New Flyer 1995 and 1997 bus series, which included complaints of inadequate seats, suspension, and steering. A team consisting of health and safety experts, supervisors, and maintenance staff conducted a comprehensive bus assessment which included driving tests, review of past maintenance records, and identification of mechanical defects for each individual unit within this series of buses. The results of the assessment, combined with the immediate repair of identified defects, concluded that these buses were safe to operate and met all industry standards. This assessment further resulted in a revised approach to designing return-to-work programs for injured employees.

Mobile Data Terminals - Access Transit

On board Mobile Data Terminals were installed on Access Transit buses and have improved efficiencies by providing up-to-date location and departure times. The global positioning system enables the scheduling staff at Access Transit with the ability to optimize routing and rescheduling to make the service more effective, and makes pick up and drop off times more accurate.

Electronic Inventory of Public Art Pieces

Staff compiled a comprehensive list of all public art pieces which are the property of the City of Saskatoon. This document includes details about the artist, the medium of the art piece (i.e. clay, bronze, marble, etc.), the assessed value, date of installation, required maintenance, location, and any special notes about the art piece. This electronic inventory now provides a comprehensive, easy-access summary of all public art pieces. This list is being used to assess accurate value for insurance purposes, allows better tracking for required maintenance to ensure the value of the asset is maintained, and a better summary document which ensures appropriate budget allocation for the maintenance of the public art. (There is no definitive cost savings or quantifiable staff savings, but the process has ensured a more thorough, accurate, and readily available inventory of public art).

Blogs/Wikis

Blogs and wikis were introduced to improve and enhance the community engagement processes. Blogs and wikis allow for quick and efficient updating of civic project information, are free of cost, and allow for the public to have ongoing dialogue, and post pictures or information. The public receives instant updates on changes to content regarding materials that may be of interest to them or their community. Blogs have been created for the Pleasant Hill Village Project, South Caswell Hill Concept Plan, and a Facebook page has been utilized during the Westmount Local Area Planning process.

On-line Grant Application Process for Social Agencies

An on-line grant application system was set up for social agencies applying for grants under the cash grant social component. This on-line application process was developed by our Saskatoon Collaborative Funding Partnership

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(which is a joint partnership between three funding agencies: the City of Saskatoon, United Way of Saskatoon and Area, and the Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Strategy). This on-line application process has saved time for both the social agencies who now only need to fill out one grant application form for all three organizations in the partnership, and it has saved work time for the Grants Administration Clerk who used to do the data entry for all grant applications received (about 20 minutes per application for 100 applications saves 34 hours of data entry).

New Home Based Business Regulations

New performance-based regulations for home based businesses have led to an expedited license review process and much easier regulations for all to understand. The new standards allow flexibility for new types of businesses, which is more responsive to the rapid pace of change in a technology based world.

New Business Start-Up Guide

The City's Business License Program has adopted a new Business Start-Up Guide that gives any prospective business operator a quick and friendly introduction to starting a business in Saskatoon. The guide contains various easy to use checklists and links to other business partner organizations such as the Province, the Saskatoon Health Region, and many more. The guide is available on-line or as a handy brochure.

Landfill Wait Times

In order to reduce landfill line-ups during peak periods, the following initiatives were implemented:

- Five dollar loads were collected on both the inbound and outbound lanes. In the past, the entry fee was only collected on the outbound lane which, at peak times, could create line-ups when exiting the landfill. Customer service was improved with better traffic flow.
- Additional staff members were brought in to provide better coverage to speed up the flow of traffic into, as well as out of, the landfill.
- Compostable material is no longer accepted at the landfill, reducing traffic into the landfill as well as eliminating the need to haul material from the landfill to the compost site. Residents can now utilize one of two compost depots free of charge.

College Park Substation and Distribution Improvements

A major upgrade to the College Park Substation was completed in 2009. This upgrade will provide better backup and transfer of electricity in the event of an outage. The upgrades in the College Park electrical distribution area will improve the reliability of service and a reduction of outage occurrences and length, as well as the associated overtime and infrastructure replacement costs.

Increasing Our Savings

New-To-You Transit Buses - Estimated Savings - \$3 million

Determined to cut costs and breathe new life into its existing fleet, Saskatoon Transit has initiated an innovative refurbishment program for aging buses. The program has resulted in a huge cost savings since the City can now restore and re-commission 15 old buses for the price of a new one (\$450,000) and get another 7-8 years out of each one.

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Purchase Mid-Sized Floor Buses - Estimated Savings - \$1.2 million

Transit Services has recently ordered four mid-sized low floor buses for approximately \$600,000. These mid-sized buses seat 21 passengers and will be utilized for routes where demand is lower than other routes. The cost to purchase and operate these buses is significantly lower than the standard bus, and the mid-sized bus provides added versatility to transit service levels throughout the city. This purchase has resulted in a significant cost saving since the price of a new mid-sized low floor bus is one-third the cost of a larger bus (\$150,000 vs. \$450,000).

Peer Fitness Program - Estimated Savings - \$10,000

Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services was allocated \$20,000 in order to initiate the Peer Fitness Program which is supported by the International Association of Fire Fighters and International Association of Fire Chiefs. This Program is meant to improve the overall health and fitness of fire fighters, as well as to proactively identify potential health concerns leading to early diagnosis and required treatment. In October 2009, Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services hosted the first certified trainer program, which was participated in by departments across Canada (25 participants including 12 from Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services).

The Department has already recouped approximately \$10,000 through outside registration fees, thus allowing 12 Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services employees to take the training and become certified at no cost to the department. The required physical fitness testing equipment has been purchased from the initial \$20,000 allotment. The Department's goal is to host the Program again in 2011 and 2012, resulting in a break-even point in 2011, and return on investment in 2012. This Program will also result in a pre-emption of lost-time illness.

Home First Program - Additional Revenue: \$250,000 over life of program

Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services maintains its agreement with the Ministry of Social Services to inspect rental accommodations prior to Social Services clients taking possession. To date, Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services has completed approximately 3,850 inspections which would not normally have required inspection prior to the implementation of the Home First Program.

The Ministry was paying the City a fee based on an average of 23 inspections per week at a cost of \$75 per inspection. Effective April 1, 2009, the fee was increased to \$80 per inspection. This Program is entering its fifth year, and the City will soon be renewing its agreement with the Ministry of Social Services for the period April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2011.

Green Streets - Estimated Savings: \$2.95 million in 2008 & 2009

The City has introduced a fresh approach to road rehabilitation that reuses material once destined for the landfill. Road and sidewalk rubble, building bricks, and even glass and porcelain are some of the materials that are now being used as base layers for our roads. It also resulted in less waste to haul and deposit at the landfill.

Material Handling - Estimated Savings: \$200,000

The City commissioned a second material handling site, adjacent to the landfill, to store construction material such as clean fill, gravel/base, concrete, and asphalt before re-use. Since this material was previously hauled to a site outside city limits, the change has resulted in a savings on the hauling costs, and increased the efficiency of crews by 8%.

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Bulk Purchases - Estimated Savings: \$275,000

- a) Apparatus for Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services: Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services took delivery of four rescue pumpers, one bush truck, and one custom-built heavy rescue unit. By taking advantage of a bulk purchase approved by City Council in late 2007, the City realized a savings by purchasing four identical rescue pumper units at the same time.
- b) Fire Fighter Gear: Fifty sets of fire fighter protective clothing (turnout gear) were purchased prior to a price increase from the supplier. This bulk purchase not only outfitted new recruits, it satisfied requirements for spare turnout gear.

Fill Station - Oxygen Tanks - Estimated Savings: \$30,000 annually

The Department purchased its own oxygen fill station at a cost of \$5,000 and leases oxygen tanks at a cost of \$600 per year. This allows the tanks to be filled as required on site, and the necessary number of reserve tanks are on hand at all times. Prior to owning the fill station, tanks were filled by an outside source at a cost of \$3,000 per year. This will be paid back over two years in addition to improving the overall oxygen management system.

General Contractor Work - Estimated Savings: \$154,000

SL&P acted as its own general contractor for construction of a new network vault on 3rd Avenue. The decision to act as its own general contractor was in response to the increased costs quoted at the time of the tender process. As a result, SL&P realized a saving of approximately \$154,000.

Installation of New Electronic Residential Electric Meters - New Revenue: \$30,000

Metering Services installed approximately 4,000 new electronic/SMART residential electric meters. This is approximately 8% of SL&P's residential meter population. These new meters are much more accurate than the old style, and it is expected that the increase in revenue, as a result of these meters, will be approximately 0.6% or \$30,000.

Ultraviolet Disinfection - Estimated Savings: \$110,000 annually

The construction and commissioning of the Ultraviolet Disinfection Facility was completed at the end of November 2009. This eliminated the use of chlorine gas at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, which significantly reduces our chemical budget by \$110,000 per year and provides greater protection to the South Saskatchewan River.

New Digital Filing System for the Business License Program

The Business License Program has adopted a new digital filing system that will save approximately \$25,000 a year in document filing and retrieval costs. This system was recently implemented and provides quick and easy access to records for day-to-day operations and business research requests.

eBill - Estimated Savings: \$1,300

eBill was introduced to our customers with the launch of the new City of Saskatoon portal in mid-September. Adoption of the process has been steadily increasing, with approximately 1% of our customers opting for eBill by the end of 2009. The industry average for electronic billing is approximately 10% of the customer base, so increased savings are anticipated in 2010 and future years.

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Leisure Guide Printing - Estimated Savings: \$6,000 annually

Each season, approximately 3,500 - 6,000 seasonal drop-in calendars were printed and delivered to seven sites at a cost of \$6,000 per year. As changes took place during the season, there was no efficient way for the indoor leisure centres to update the drop-in brochures. This resulted in reduced value of the pre-printed drop-in brochures and waste. In 2009, changes were made that allowed each indoor leisure centre the ability to update their drop-in calendar with timely and relevant information while maintaining the brand identity and consistency with the Leisure Guide. Drop-in brochures are now printed as needed which has significantly reduced waste by approximately 40%.

Online Parking Ticket Payments - Estimated Savings: \$2,500

This process was introduced to allow customers to make parking ticket payments online using credit cards. Time and cost savings are realized as these payments had previously been processed by either our cashiers or remittance processing systems. This was introduced in mid-2008 after which 7,199 parking tickets were processed at an average of 15 seconds per payment for a time savings of 30 hours (5 hours per month). Productivity savings realized in 2009 grew to an average of 11 hours per month with 31,661 transactions processed.

Online Meter Reading - Estimated Savings: \$2,500

This application was introduced in mid-2008 and allows a customer to enter their meter read online, which is then automatically uploaded into the CIS database. The productivity gain from not having staff manually enter customer card reads has grown substantially in 2009. In 2009, there was an additional 6,500 online reads for an increased productivity saving of 108 hours.

New Remittance Processors Implemented - Estimated Savings: \$2,500

The new remittance processors allow employees to process payments in a more expeditious manner by minimizing the need for manual keying. The productivity improvement for the Remittance Section rests with the time savings by employing more efficient processing equipment, and allows staff resources to be allocated more quickly to other important job duties. Since implementation in August 2009, the time savings has been about one-half hour per day or roughly 10 hours per month.

Community Newsletter Distributed Online - Estimated Savings: \$1,500

Community newsletters were electronically distributed for all community associations. As a result, this process has saved paper, the cost for photocopying, the staff time to mail out the newsletters, and postage. This method of distribution has been well received by the community associations and their constituents.

Growing Our City In A Sustainable Way

Projects that have reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions tend to be listed as CO₂e and are measured in tonnes. Carbon equivalents provide a universal measure by which to compare all greenhouse gases and to express them in common units. Because carbon dioxide is the most prevalent greenhouse gas, other greenhouse gases have been given a carbon equivalent value.

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a) Composting Programs - 17,650 tonnes CO₂e annually

- In 2009, 17,500 tonnes of organics were diverted from the landfill and delivered to the composting depots, which is quadruple the tonnage from 2008. This material will be composted to deliver high-quality soil which groups such as the Parks Branch have been utilizing. The compost depots collected leaf and yard waste with 1,600 subscribers, and the Christmas tree program collected 6,400 trees.
- The Home Composter Rebate Program and Home Composter Truckload Sale contributed to 150 tonnes annually of diverted compost (2,500 composters sold, each diverting 0.25 tonnes of organics per year)

b) Corporate Vehicles - 32 tonnes CO₂e annually

- A City of Saskatoon policy requires that city-operated vehicles reduce idling. It is estimated that this reduces approximately 25 tonnes annually, based on reducing average idling time by 20 minutes per day.
- Two Smart Cars were used to replace the use of ¼ ton trucks and the impact of reduced greenhouse gas emission is estimated at 7 tonnes annually.

c) Energy Reduction Public Programs -1,910 tonnes CO₂e annually

- The low flow showerhead giveaway program is estimated to reduce 1,110 tonnes annually (3,000 showerheads, annual reduction 0.37 tonnes per showerhead).
- The CFL light bulb giveaway is estimated to reduce 800 tonnes annually (8,000 CFL bulbs replacing same number of incandescent, annual reduction 0.1 tonnes per bulb).

d) Transportation related public programs - 100 tonnes CO₂e annually

- Commuter Week promoted residents to travel to work without using a motorized vehicle, and to choose alternate forms of transportation, such as walking, biking, or rollerblading. The estimated reduction is 50 tonnes annually.
- Rideshare Week/ promoted residents to carpool and the estimated reduction is 50 tonnes annually.

Solar Thermal Energy System at Saskatoon Light & Power Operations Centre

A solar thermal energy system was installed at its Operations Centre at 322 Brand Road. The additional heat provided by the solar thermal system has significantly reduced natural gas requirements for its hot water usage by approximately 50%.

Improvements to the Wastewater Treatment Plant

- a) *Grit and Screening Facility:* The Grit and Screening Facility at the Wastewater Treatment Plant removes solids (grit) and non-dissolvable items from the incoming wastewater. A new Grit and Screening Facility was fully commissioned in 2009 resulting in an increase in the amount of grit removed from the wastewater entering the plant. The increased efficiency of the system will greatly reduce the amount of maintenance required in the plant due to the reduced accumulation of grit in the basins, pumps, and valves. The upgrade also consisted of a change to the screening and removal

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system. The non-disposable items are now washed and compressed to reduce odour, as well as to reduce the volume of material going to the landfill.

- b) *Improved maintenance procedures:* Innovative new methods were implemented for the cleaning of the digesters and fermentors. Past practice was to pump the tanks down and send the waste material to settling ponds west of the Wastewater Treatment Plant, where the remaining material would then need to be trucked away, and creating odour issues. The waste material in the tanks is now pumped to the new Grit and Screen facility. The remaining material in the digester is removed with the use of a crane truck equipped with a specially manufactured bucket. With the approval of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment, the remaining material is hauled to the west side of the plant. This new method significantly reduces odours generated by this type of maintenance and eliminates costs for double handling the material.
- c) *Secondary Clarifiers in the Wastewater Treatment Plant:* During the winter months, icing of the wastewater in the clarifiers is common. This results in additional staff being called in on a regular basis to remove the ice build-up. This summer, several different possibilities to eliminate or mitigate these icing issues were examined. Ice build-up will be reduced by lowering the sprayers on one clarifier to reduce the foam and lowering the center mixing ring on another sprayer to keep the foam moving outwards.

Dundonald Yards Aggregate Processing Facility

In early 2009, Dundonald Yards began accepting aggregate materials for recycling. This has resulted in diverting from the landfill over 30,000 tonnes of concrete, asphalt, bricks, and other materials such as glass for recycling into road materials. These materials have come from roads, sidewalks, and buildings such as the Barry Hotel, Folks Finer Furs, and the old Zellers location on 8th Street.

Landfill Access Road Widening

Part of the landfill access road was widened to facilitate access to the site. This project was completed using exclusively recycled materials, over 12,000 tonnes in total. Two hundred tonnes of crushed recycled glass were also included in this project, with very promising results based on preliminary mechanistic testing.

Shingle Diversion

Over 5,400 tonnes of shingles were separated from the waste stream at the landfill to be recycled for future projects. This material is intended to be used for road construction. An evaluation of this initiative will continue in 2010.

Sustainable Neighbourhood Designs for Evergreen and Kensington Neighbourhoods

The City of Saskatoon continues to provide leadership, in applying creative and innovative approaches to neighbourhood design. This includes a land development approach which has doubled the density of development from other existing conventional neighbourhoods (from 4 units per acre to 8 units per acre), provided increased utilization of joint use linear park and storm water management areas, solar lot orientation increased choice of housing types, and retention of important and sensitive natural features.